

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-14 SP-02 EUR-10 L-02 EB-03 IO-03

INR-10 DRC-01 RSC-01 /051 W
----- 042288

R 081520Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4405

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USEC BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BUKAVU

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUJUMBURA 0639

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, BU, RW, US

SUBJECT: AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR BURQMDI-RWAMBA COOPERATION

REF: A. KIGALI 543; B. BUJUMBURA 618

SUMMARY: SUBJECT TO VIEWS OF EMBASSY KIGALI, WE PROPOSE THAT DEPT.
AND AID CONSIDER A U.S.-FUNDED STUDY TEAM TO EXAMINE THE FEASIBILITY
OF CONCRETE PROJECTS TO CONSOLIDATE THE ONGOING RWANDA-BURUNDI
BILATERAL RAPPROCHEMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. REF A MAKES IT CLEAR THAT PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA HAS INVESTED
SUBSTANTIAL POLITICAL CAPITAL, NOT WITHOUT SOME RESERVATIONS
ELSEWHERE IN THE LEADERSHIP, IN A RWANDAN RAPPROCHEMENT WITH
BURUNDI. REF B POINTS OUT THAT BURYING THE HATCHET
AND UNDERTAKING COLLABORATIVE ARRANGEMENTS IS A BASIC ELEMENT OF
CURRENT GRB FOREIGN POLICY. AS SEEN FROM BUJUMBURA AT LEAST, THE
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NEW LINKS BETWEEN THE TWO NEIGHBORS ARE STILL VERY FRAGILE AND NOT

AT ALL SPECIFIC. THE RWANDAN AMBASSADOR HERE, WHO WAS IN KIGALI FOR MICOMBERO'S VISIT LAST WEEK, CONFIRMS THAT THE CHANGED CLIMATE HAS SO FAR NOT GONE BEYOND ATMOSPHERICS. BESIDES, IT WILL REMAIN TRUE THAT BILATERAL TIES WILL LABOR UNDER THE SEVERE PSYCHOLOGICAL HANDICAP OF QUIESCENT BUT BY NO MEANS EXTINCT MEMORIES OF MUTUAL ETHNIC HATRED AND POLITICAL ANTAGONISM; AND EACH COUNTRY HAS A SIZABLE AND OFTEN BITTER REFUGEE ELEMENT FROM THE OTHER ON ITS TERRITORY.

2. AS AGAINST THESE SOMBER REALITIES, ONE CAN REFER BACK TO BELGIAN COLONIAL DAYS WHEN THE TWO LANDS WERE ADMINISTERED AS A POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC UNIT; AND THE RECORD EVEN INDICATES THAT IT WAS THE HOPE OF BOTH THE BELGIANS AND THE U.N. TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL THAT THE WHILE AREA REMAIN ECONOMICALLY UNITED AFTER INDEPENDENCE. GIVEN THE FACT THAT THE TWO ECONOMIES ARE STILL MOSTLY NON-MONETIZED, IN THAT ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IS USUALLY SELF-CONTAINED AND FOCUSED ON THE LOCAL HILL AREA, THE POSSIBILITIES OF BILATERAL COLLUORATION ARE NOT OVERWHELMING. NONETHELESS, THE TWO ECONOMIES ARE LARGELY THE SAME, HAVE ANALOGOUS DEVELOPMENTAL PROBLEMS, AND HAVE FORMULATED SIMILAR PRIORITIES FOR CONSTRUCTING INFRASTRUCTURE, SMALL INDUSTRY, AND EDUCATIONAL AND MARKETING SYSTEMS.

3. IF BOTH COUNTRIES, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE SHORT OF CEMENT, IT MIGHT BE QUITE UNECONOMIC FOR EACH TO BUILD A SMALL PLANT; WHEREAS IT WOULD MAKE SENSE FOR ONE TO BUILD A LARGER FACTORY TO SUPPLY THEM BOTH. TO BE SURE, SUCH A COURSE WOULD MAKE THE COUNTRY WITHOUT THE CEMENT WORKS HOSTAGE TO A DEGREE TO THE GOOD WILL OF ITS NEIGHBOR. THUS, A REVERSE DEPENDENCY WOULD HAVE TO BE CREATED IN SOME OTHER AREA, SAY A TANNERY OR SUGAR MILL. SUCH MUTUAL INVOLVEMENT WOULD, NATURALLY, NOT GUARANTEE ETERNAL PEACE BETWEEN RWANDA AND BURUNDI, SINCE PASSIONS CAN HERE, AS ELSEWHERE, OVERRIDE RATIONALITY, BUT IT COULD AT LEAST RAISE THE THRESHOLD FOR THE ONSET OF IRRATIONALITY; AND, IN TIME, IT MIGHT WORK POWERFULLY TO CONSOLIDATE A NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NEIGHBORS.

4. WHAT SEEMS NEEDED, THEREFORE, IS SOME INITIATIVE TO CAPITALIZE ON THE NEW AND HIGHLY FAVORABLE FRAME OF MIND OF THE TWO NATIONAL LEADERSHIPS BY MOVING THE RECONCILIATION PROCESS FROM GENERALITIES TO SPECIFICS. UNFORTUNATELY, HOWEVER, THIS IS ONE AREA IN WHICH LOCAL

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GOVERNMENTS TEND TO BE WEAKEST. IN BURUNDI, PLANNING HAS BEEN A SHAMBLES (ALTHOUGH WE HAVE SOME HOPE FOR IMPROVEMENT UNDER NEW SECRETARY-GENERAL BIHUTE), AND IT IS HARD ENOUGH TO GET PROJECTS GOING EVEN ON A NATIONAL LEVEL. (WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE MINISTRY OF PLAN AND NATURAL RESOURCES IN KIGALI IS IN SOMEWHAT BETTER SHAPE.) FOREIGN AID PROGRAMS ARE STILL ALL ORIENTED ON THE INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY

(EXCEPT FOR THE BELOW-NOTED FED SCHEME AND FOR ONE SLOW-MOVING U.N.

PROJECT STILL IN THE STUDY STAGE, WHICH ENVISAGES MULTIFACETED DEVELOPMENT OF THE KAGERA RIVER BASIN, EMBRACING RWANDA, BURUNDI, UGANDA, AND TANZANIA). THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR HAS TOLD ME THAT HE HAS NO IDEA OF WHAT THE FRG IS UP TO IN RWANDA, AND THAT HIS TECHNICAL EXPERTS FOCUS ONLY ON BURUNDI.

5. A FEW PEOPLE IN THE EC AID PROGRAM (FED) HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT BINATIONAL COLLABORATIVE POSSIBILITIES, BUT THEY HAVE NOT BROACHED THIS TO THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. INDEED, FED PLANNING FOR THE FOURTH AID PROGRAM (BEGINNING IN 1977) WILL REPORTEDLY INSIST ON LESS INITIATIVE FROM THE EUROPEAN DONORS AND MORE IDEAS FROM THE RECIPIENTS, SO AS TO ELIMINATE ANY AURA OF "PAPA KNOWS BEST" PATERNALISM. THIS APPROACH APPARENTLY RULES OUT AN ACTIVE EFFORT TO FOSTER BURUNDI-RWANDA COOPERATION.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUJUMBURA 0639

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6. AS A POSSIBLE EXCEPTION TO THIS PICTURE, ONE SHOULD MENTION A FED DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR THE REGION OF LAKE KIVU AND THE RUZIZI PLAIN, WHICH INVOLVES ZAIRE, BURUNDI, AND RWANDA, AND WHICH EC HEADQUARTERS IS RIGHT NOW TRYING TO REINITIATE IN THE STUDY STAGE AFTER SOME YEARS OF INACTIVITY. OF COURSE, MANY PROJECTS THAT MIGHT AT SOME POINT EVENTUATE IN THIS TRIPARTITE CONTEXT WOULD CERTAINLY BRING POLITICAL AS WELL AS ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO ALL THREE STATES. HOWEVER, ZAIRE'S INVOLVEMENT ADDS A "BIG POWER" COMPLICATION AND RESTRICTS COLLABORATION TO THE EXTREME WESTERN PORTIONS OF RWANDA AND BURUNDI. THUS, THE DIRECT IMPACT ON THE GOR-GRB RELATIONSHIP IS LIKELY TO BE BOTH MORE ATTENUATED AND HARDER TO REALIZE.

7. THESE CIRCUMSTANCES LEAD ME TO POSE THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE
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U.S. SHOULD SEEK TO ACT AS A CATALYST. CERTAINLY, WE HAVE A HUMANITARIAN INTEREST IN THE AVOIDANCE OF FURTHER TUTSI-HUTU BLOODSHED, AND A GENERAL DESIRE TO PROMOTE STABILITY IN THIS REGION OF AFRICA AND TO PUSH FOR TRANSNATIONAL COLLABORATION AMONG LDC'S. MOREOVER WITH THE PROBABILITY GROWING OF A SIZABLE AMERICAN INVESTMENT OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS IN THE BURUNDI NICKEL PROJECT, THERE WILL BE A DIRECT U.S. INTEREST IN LOCAL STABILITY AND GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS.

8. IF THE DEPARTMENT AND KIGALI SEE POSSIBLE MERIT IN A U.S. APPROACH, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER AID MIGHT HAVE ANY FUNDS FOR SENDING EITHER A FEW OF ITS OWN EXPERTS OR ELSE SOME OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS TO THIS AREA TO EXAMINE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR COMMINGLING THE TWO ECONOMIES. THE STUDY PROJECT WOULD HAVE TO BE BASED ON A SURVEY OF CURRENT ECONOMIC PLANS IN EACH COUNTRY, AS WELL AS ON POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS NOW ONLY IN A DISCUSSION STAGE. ON THE BASIS OF ACQUIRED DATA, SPECIFIC COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS OR ACTIVITIES COULD BE SUGGESTED. SINCE THE STUDY WOULD NOT ENGAGE IN MUCH ORIGINAL FIELD WORK, BUT WOULD BUILD UPON DOCUMENTS AND IDEAS ALREADY HELD BY MINISTRIES IN RWANDA AND BURUNDI AND BY VARIOUS BILATERAL, MULTILATERAL, AND INTERNATIONAL FOREIGN ASSISTANCE OFFICES IN THE TWO CAPITALS, THE STUDY COULD ONLY BE UNDERTAKEN WITH THE FULL PREVIOUSLY AGREED ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS AND WITH THE PROSPECT OF CONSIDERABLE COOPERATION BY OTHER DONORS. WHILE KIVU PROVINCE OF ZAIRE COULD NOT BE IGNORED IN THE STUDY, THERE IS A QUESTION OF HOW FORMALLY THE ZAIRE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE BROUGHT INTO THE RESEARCH, GIVEN THE COMPLICATIONS INEVITABLY ATTENDANT ON ITS INVOLVEMENT.

9. NATURALLY, BOTH THE RWANDA AND BURUNDI GOVERNMENTS WOULD

HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT ANY U.S. STUDY ARRANGEMENT IMPLIED ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ABOUT FUTURE U.S. PARTICIPATION IN IMPLEMENTATION OF ANY OF THE BILATERAL COOPERATIVE PROJECTS SUGGESTED. INDEED, THE U.S. STUDY WOULD HAVE TO BE BILLED AS A SERVICE TO THE GOR, FRB, AND OTHER DONORS TO HELP THEM TO MAKE THEIR OWN CONTRIBUTIONS MORE EFFECTIVE. WITH THIS UNDERSTANDING, THE STUDY MIGHT FOCUS ON SUCH POSSIBILITIES AS JOINT DEVELOPMENT OF COMMON RIVERS OR RIVER BASINS; PARTICIPATION OF RWANDA IN SOME ASPECTS (E.G., MANPOWER, TRANSPORT, OR POWER

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GENERATION) OF BURUNDI'S NICKEL EXPLOITATION EFFORT; COMMON NEEDS FOR CREATION OF SMALL INDUSTRIAL PLANTS TO SERVE BOTH LANDS, INCLUDING MAXIMIZATION OF LOCATIONAL BENEFITS AND MARKET POTENTIAL; FEASIBILITY OF POOLING FOOD RESERVES AND BUILDING JOINT STOCKPILES OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD, INCLUDING THE ORGANIZATION OF JOINT AGRICULTURAL PROCESSING AND MARKETING FACILITIES; INTEGRATION OF TRANSPORT ROUTES AND SERVICES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD, INCLUDING THE EXPANSION WHERE ECONOMICALLY JUSTIFIED OF THE USE OF AIR FREIGHT FOR IMPORTS AND EXPORTS; RESTORATION OF COLLABORATION IN COFFEE PRODUCTION AND SALES AND POSSIBLE EXTENSION OF THESE PROCEDURES TO THE EXPORT OF TEA AND OTHER PRODUCTS; POSSIBLE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMON COMMERCIAL AIRLINE; SHARING OF ELECTRICITY GENERATED FROM EXISTING AND NEW FACILITIES IN EACH COUNTRY; AND AVOIDANCE OF DUPLICATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION FACILITIES BY SUITABLE DIVISION OF FACULTIES BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS.

10. TO RECAPITULATE, ANY STEP TO IMPLEMENT THIS APPROACH IS FIRST SUBJECT TO AMBASSADOR FRITTS' VIEWS AND CONCURRENCE. IF HE IS INCLINED TO PROCEED, WITH OR WITHOUT MODIFICATIONS, THE NEXT MOVE WOULD BE DEPT. AND AID CLEARANCE IN PRINCIPLE FOR THE PROJECT. ONLY THEN WOULD AN APPROACH BE MADE TO THE TWO GOVERNMENTS FOR REACTION, WHICH, IF FAVORABLE, COULD LEAD TO CONSULTATION WITH DONOR GOVERNMENTS AND AGENCIES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BUJUMB00639
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740285-0608
From: BUJUMBURA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741065/aaaacddd.tel
Line Count: 262
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: A. KIGALI 543; B. BUJUMBURA 618
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <29 JUL 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR BURQMDI-RWAMBA COOPERATION
TAGS: PFOR, EAID, BU, RW, US
To: STATE KIGALI
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005